

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Preliminarily, the Applicants would like to thank the Examiner for permitting an interview in this case.

Reconsideration and allowance of the present application based on the following remarks are respectfully requested.

Upon entry of the above amendments, claims 1-3, 5-7, 9-10, and 12-18, as amended, will be pending. Support for the above amendments can be found throughout the specification, for example, at page 2, line 1, at page 25, lines 33-35 and at page 27, lines 4-5. Accordingly, no new matter has been introduced.

Claims 1-11 and 13-19 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over JP 02300281A in view of US 5,624,978 ("Soltwedel"). In addition, claims 1-19 stand rejected over Soltwedel in view of US 5,804,610 ("Hamer"). The Applicants assert that presently pending claims are free of the art, as suggested by the Examiner during a person to person interview with the Applicants' attorney.

During the interview conducted on January 20, 2004, the above listed references were discussed, as was claim 1. The Examiner suggested that a claim, such as presently pending claim 1, would not be obvious in light of the sighted art because none of the references teach the bonding a thermoplastic film directly on the second coating layer using an adhesive to form a third coating layer of the protective and decorative laminar finish.

Therefore, all objections and rejections having been addressed, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is in a condition for allowance and a Notice to that effect is earnestly solicited.

Should any issues remain unresolved, the Examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned attorney for Applicants at the telephone number indicated below in order to expeditiously resolve any remaining issues.

Respectfully submitted,

PILLSBURY WINTHROP LLP

By: 

Christopher M. Beck
Registration No. 52,603
Direct No. (703) 905-2013

Paul L. Sharer
Registration No. 36,004
Direct No. (703) 905-2180

PLS/CMB
1600 Tysons Boulevard
McLean, VA 22101
(703) 905-2000 Telephone
(703) 905-2500 Facsimile

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